"The Angry Black Girl"
Using *The Hate U Give* To Teach Critical Race Theory

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Abstract
This essay examines the portrayal of institutionalized racism and internalized racism in Angie Thomas' novel *The Hate U Give*. We also offer a model based on our analysis to help facilitate discussion among students and teachers about our chosen concepts of critical race theory. The analysis is done by focusing on the portrayal of institutions, characters, and relationships in the novel as well as using previous work on critical race theory. The model is created with the intention not to be exclusive to our chosen novel but instead be applicable to other stories about race and/or racial injustice. Some connections to reality are made in order to bring more relevance to the subject. We briefly examine difficulties students may encounter when reading *The Hate U Give* through the lens of critical race theory. By engaging with these themes and providing an instructional model, this essay contributes to a deeper understanding of the novel's exploration of racism and offers a framework for examining racial issues in literature more broadly.
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1. Introduction

The lack of African and African American historical representation in English educational materials in the Swedish school system is a problem. Lamar L. Johnson argues that choosing Eurocentric texts that omit the lived realities of African American people or misrepresent the multiple ways of being colored leads to anti-blackness and the devaluation of African American life (109). Giving Swedish teachers reasonable directions for how and why they should work with African American history, as well as that of other minorities, in Swedish schools is important.

However, the curriculum provides teachers with opportunities to address this lack of representation themselves. One possibility is integrating the subject with literature, as reading fiction is included in the Swedish curriculum for the English subject (Skolverket English 3). Literature can help readers with no previous experience of racism to understand and sympathize with the characters they are reading about. Ned Curthoys explains how bonding with fictional protagonists can contribute to emotional learning, which allows for rich conversations and knowledge development in the field (269). He explains the process readers go through:

This process of emotional learning allows the child subject to question the belief systems perpetrated by repressive authorities, celebrate their own instinct for explorative play, construct alternative imaginative worlds, value friendship as a transcendental prerogative, and enjoy the pleasures of thinking and reflection (Curthoys 256).

Reading fiction with characters that students can relate to in their everyday life makes it easier for students who never experienced racism to relate to what those who did might go through. This can further motivate inexperienced students toward understanding and taking responsibility.

1.1. Aim of essay

The situation in the United States, where African Americans have endured racism and still do, is not directly applicable to the situation in Sweden. Still, we believe that stories about racism are relevant for the students in Sweden, and the Swedish curriculum
seems to support this view. One aim related to the teaching of English in Swedish schools is to provide students with "[t]he ability to discuss and reflect on living conditions, social issues, and cultural features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used" (Skolverket English 2). Moreover, the Swedish national curriculum states that the school is responsible for supporting students in becoming democratic citizens. One of the specific objectives of education is that teachers will create an environment that facilitates learning ethical perspectives that "support their [students’] ability to develop personal views" (Skolverket 6). Teachers are also to include international perspectives so that students can develop an understanding of reality in a global context and can discuss how to create international solidarity. Finally, the curriculum highlights the importance of a historical perspective in order to "develop an understanding of the present and a preparedness for the future" (Skolverket 6).

Anti-racism movements are appearing all over the world with loud demonstrations and criticism towards the racism minorities are experiencing today. With the help of *The Hate U Give*, we hope to create a classroom discussion environment where the students can take a step toward dismantling racism and white privilege. We have chosen to work with Angie Thomas’s novel to emphasize and highlight African American voices. Our goal in this essay is to offer ways to have a nuanced discussion about the content of the novel in a Swedish upper-secondary English classroom. The discussion presented here takes as its starting-point an understanding of what institutionalized racism and internalized racism are and how they are present in public institutions and the everyday lives of people of color. We claim that Angie Thomas’s novel is well-suited to teaching our students about the mechanisms of racism and provide arguments as to why this is so.

1.2. Focus questions

- How are institutionalized racism and internalized racism portrayed in *The Hate U Give*?
- How can teachers use *The Hate U Give* in the classroom to teach about institutionalized racism and internalized racism?
2. Background to *The Hate U Give*

2.1. *The Hate U Give*

The novel tells the story of a 16-year-old African American girl named Starr Carter. Starr is the narrator giving the reader a clear insight into her life as an African American teenager and all the turbulent events she endures. She lives in Garden Heights, a neighborhood characterized by poverty, gang violence, and drugs, but she attends a mainly white high school in the suburbs. Starr struggles to reconcile the two worlds she inhabits. She has to navigate the expectations of her community and those of her school, where her classmates are mostly white and privileged.

The story starts with an event that turns Starr's world upside down. The police shooting of her best friend Khalil, an unarmed African American youth, causes a massive uproar in Starr's community, and, with her as the only witness, Starr is thrown into the center of the debate about police brutality and racial profiling. As Starr navigates the aftermath of the shooting, she is torn between what she knows is right and the pressure from the various factions of her community, who are divided on the issue. Starr's testimony about the incident becomes crucial for the case, and she must choose between speaking out or remaining silent. As the story progresses, Starr becomes increasingly involved in activism and advocacy for justice for Khalil and other victims of police brutality. Ultimately, the grand jury decides not to press any charges against the police officer, which starts a violent protest that gets out of hand. The reader then follows Starr through other events and conflicts. Among other things, Starr realizes that one of her best friends has opposing values, and she begins to doubt whether she is doing the right thing in having a white boyfriend.

2.2. Early reception

The book received a considerable amount of positive reviews worldwide when it was published in 2017. Alex Wheatle wrote in *The Guardian* that the novel depicts different relationships between people with different backgrounds and reflects an "us versus you" feeling. Wheatle focuses on the oppressive aspects of the African American experience, showing how Big Mav, Starr's father, Maverick, is assaulted by the police even though he shows respect, how African Americans teach their children to survive an
interrogation with the police force, and how white privilege affects people. By paying attention to the fact that African Americans are oppressed, and talking about it as an issue, Wheatle influences future readers of *The Hate U Give*, giving them preconceived expectations.

Anna Diamond writes in *The Atlantic* about the connections between the novel and real-life events and, more specifically, about the similarities between the killing of Eric Garner and the situation in the book. By drawing parallels to real-life events, the novel immediately demands to be taken more seriously. Garner's last words, "I can't breathe," are emphasized in the novel and symbolize the police brutality that African Americans experience. The phrase has become a symbol worldwide after the death of George Floyd, which took place a few years after the novel was released. Diamond states that the novel gives a voice to oppressed people, especially African Americans, by providing examples of people in situations similar to Starr's. It also highlights the institutionalized racism that exists but is not experienced by non-African Americans.

Diamond discusses the contrasts between Starr's two lives and highlights that the novel is a typical young adult book where we encounter themes such as teenage drama, love, high school life, and friendship, and how everything is complicated by racism. Books that deal with race, such as *The Hate U Give*, have been the focus of discussion and debate in American educational contexts. Madeline Will writes in *Education Week* about how parents and community members have called for these books to be banned, claiming they promote critical race theory. Will quotes a teacher who incorporates *The Hate U Give* into his teaching regarding how he has been accused of "woke indoctrination" (Will) and of attempting to evoke negative feelings among white students. According to Sarah Schwartz in *Education Week*, the outcry against "woke indoctrination" is a widely spread phenomenon. Forty-four states have introduced bills or taken steps toward restricting teaching critical race theory in school, and eighteen of these states have successfully passed the ban. Even in states where the legislation never passed, some parent groups and school boards have challenged curriculum choices and tried to remove books from the library.
3. Literature review

There is a substantial amount of material about African American racism, especially in relation to critical race theory (CRT). When searching on the Academic Search Premier database, 3092 academic articles were found on CRT, the majority of them dealing with themes similar to those we focus on: African American racism, institutionalized racism, and oppression. Other subjects, such as racism within education, feminism, and gender, could also be found. CRT, further discussed below, is a broad conceptual framework that can be used in numerous ways and for several purposes.

Jennifer L. Martin uses CRT in her article by connecting the contemporary hip-hop culture, with which many students are familiar, to events in the novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. Martin argues that "[p]rogressive hip hop […] has the potential to inspire this critical consciousness with its critique of social forces that contribute to colonialism, racism, patriarchy, and other forms of oppression" (247). Therefore, she uses hip-hop as a gateway and looks at the novel through a lens of CRT to identify, interpret and problematize the content. The author writes about the importance of teaching our students about race and racism and that we have a responsibility to do so, but she also highlights the difficulties involved in teaching these topics. Some students may feel uncomfortable and distance themselves from the subject by refusing to read. Others will not understand or be able to reflect upon what is read due to their lack of experience (Martin 264). Since Swedish students do not have the same context as American students, they may find it hard to relate to the characters in *The Hate U Give* and the racism they experience. Still, they will be able to relate to the more general struggles of being a teenager. Therefore, Curthoys' reader process becomes relevant to young readers.

Even though a large number of studies have been conducted about CRT in education, how we as teachers must be mindful of our choice of literature and how we engage in discussions are topics that have not been studied to the same extent. Johnson stresses how the exclusion of African American authors and African American people in the American curriculum makes African American students feel invisible. He proceeds to offer a way of working with CRT in education and presents his work with the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee as an example (Johnson 118-119). Here, he focuses on the "white savior" perspective and explains how he first introduced the concept of a white savior and how the African American man is portrayed as someone in need of rescue.
Johnson refers to the South Carolina educational curriculum, which states that "students must analyze how characters or a series of ideas or events are introduced, connected, and developed within a particular context" (119). He suggests that the particular context could be CRT and that students gain a deeper understanding of the story, its historical context, and the present situation. He also claims that working with CRT counter the normativity of whiteness and racism and highlights the importance of racial dialogue, justice, and healing.

Another aspect of CRT is the language used by minorities, which April Baker-Bell examines in her article "Dismantling Anti-Black Linguistic Racism in English Language Arts Classrooms: Toward an Anti-Racist Black Language Pedagogy." Baker-Bell writes about black language in The Hate U Give, visits a ninth-grade class, and presents them with a couple of sentences, which she describes as typical Black language and white mainstream English. Her goal is for the students to discuss the relationship between language and identity. Baker-Bell uses Angie Thomas's novel The Hate U Give as a focal point and presents a model with examples of how to work with the novel in a middle or high school class to implement an Anti-Racist Black Language Pedagogy. One question is, for instance: "examine how BL reflected the Black characters' ways of knowing, interpreting, and surviving in the world" (2), BL meaning Black Language in this case.
4. Theory

4.1. Terminology

*Critical race theory* was created in a movement that studied the connection between race, racism, and power and asked critical questions about social structures and the administration of justice. As Stefan Delgado writes, this theoretical perspective is useful when studying how racism is practiced on an individual and institutional level in order to highlight the historical and contemporary impact and eventually promote social justice and equity (4). While the main focus of critical race theory is social, Delgado also emphasizes the importance of storytelling and narrative in understanding and challenging racial inequality (45). He believes that the experiences and perspectives of people of color have not been valued as they should and that by listening to these stories, we can better understand how race and racism shape our society.

Two of the key concepts in CRT are institutionalized racism and internalized racism. According to Lois Tyson, *institutionalized racism* refers to incorporated racism within institutions such as law enforcement, the educational system, and the government (345). This applies to what is written in law books and how these legal institutions treat certain groups. All forms of discrimination against African Americans have been removed from the law books today. They thus have the same rights as white Americans. However, we still see enormous inequities within institutions where African Americans are more often convicted of crimes, have a more challenging time finding work, and are not recognized for their achievements to the same extent as white Americans. In light of these observations, African Americans begin to doubt their value; they suffer from poor self-definition and self-perception, leading to internalized racism (Tyson 345). *Internalized racism* is, according to Tyson, psychological programming by society to make people of color believe in white superiority. She describes that "[v]ictims of internalized racism generally feel inferior to whites, less attractive, less worthwhile, less capable, and often wish they looked more white" (346).

Donna Bivens breaks down internalized racism into different dimensions. One is the *inner dimension* (46), or an individual's self-perception. When black people are oppressed based on physical characteristics, there remains limited space for a sense of self. The inner dimension can manifest itself in numerous ways, but Bivens highlights four: having a sense of inferiority in relation to other people, being grounded in
victimhood, being overwhelmed, and being drained by emotions. People experiencing these dimensions must deal with and focus on "reading" and trying to change white people. One effect of internalized racism, according to Bivens, is that people of color often have a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" feeling when walking a tightrope between communities of color and inherently racist social institutions.

Moreover, Bivens claims that the interpersonal dimension grows out of the inner dimension (47). This term is used to explain how internalized racism affects people of color's ability to create and nurture relationships within their group and with people enjoying white privilege. This can manifest itself as anger towards white people for their inability and/or unwillingness to be aware of or take responsibility for their privilege. In relationships with people of color, Bivens explains that the interpersonal dimension can be expressed in projecting one's own sense of inferiority upon other people of color, resulting in not trusting each other's abilities or supporting each other's leadership. Essentially, Bivens describes how internalized racism and white privilege can work in tandem and how white privilege often is not noticeable for the person enjoying the privilege. She also points out how people enjoying white privilege often network together while people suffering from internalized racism are scattered and isolated (43).

One insidious form of racism that is less flagrant but still emotionally taxing is the kind of racism that happens to people of color daily. This phenomenon is called everyday racism. Some examples are white people patronizing and/or being suspicious towards people of color for no reason as well as categorically underestimating the ability of members of a minority (Tyson 353). Additionally, members of a minority are generally in a better position to think, write and speak about race and racism compared to white people because they experience racism directly; Tyson refers to this as the voice of color (360). The terms mentioned above are the core concepts used in this essay. All of them relate to the CRT reading of The Hate U Give and help to clarify the patterns of racism within the novel.

4.2. Theoretical framework

Delgado argues that traditional legal scholarship and mainstream narratives have ignored the experiences and perspectives of people of color. In CRT, stories play a crucial role in understanding and challenging the ways in which race and racism intersect with
other forms of oppression and shape the experiences of marginalized communities (45). By listening to and valuing the stories of marginalized communities, CRT allows for a deeper understanding of how race and racism shape society (45-46). To dismantle the power structure, a precondition gives voice to marginalized communities and their experiences. Additionally, representing the resistance and agency of marginalized characters is essential (Delgado 47). Therefore, stories serve a powerful, important role in the work of counteracting racism. Critical race theorists hope to bridge the reader's and the character's lives to make people understand situations they never have been in or will be in (Delgado 49).

Furthermore, stories can connect people across different backgrounds and experiences and foster empathy and understanding. This can be particularly important in creating a sense of collective responsibility for addressing and challenging racism and other forms of oppression (Tyson 374-375). However, as mentioned earlier, Martin describes the difficulties of using CRT in the classroom. Some students will recognize themselves in the story and feel uncomfortable; to others, the story will be completely foreign and unengaging (Martin 264). Curthoys offers a way of working with novels that focus on the reader's ability to connect to the attributes of the characters in the novel, such as age, gender, and relationships. So, even if a reader does not recognize themselves in a foreign situation, they can still relate to it because they see themselves in character (Curthoys 255).

Bivens provides a presentation of a comprehensive understanding of the causes and effects of internalized racism. She points out that just as racism results in a system of structural advantage for white people, called white privilege, institutionalized racism results in a system of structural disadvantages for people of color. Bivens further claims that people of color cannot erase white privilege by themselves; white people have to conclude that upholding a system that oppresses others is not in their best interest. She also argues that the most significant contribution of people of color to erasing the existing racist system is to recognize and dismantle internalized racism (44).

Christson A. Adedoyin et al. describe ways of raising awareness of social problems, such as racism, in the classroom. Some include inviting a guest lecturer, making class visits to places where people work with these issues, or using reading materials written by oppressed people (119). The aim is to help students effectively identify issues, critically analyze them, and make connections between historical trauma and
contemporary forms of oppression. The authors claim that students need to see the importance of the situation because they think oppression is a problem of the past. The issue is problematic and should give teachers a significant reason why teaching students about racial injustice is essential.

Similarly, Tabitha Grier-Reed et al. study African American students in higher education and share their experience of anti-black attitudes in school (1). According to the authors, who analyzed group discussions, some students had experienced or seen other African Americans being mistreated, dehumanized, and marginalized, but some had "only" felt left out or unwelcome. The authors identify four different domains of antiblackness, ranging from traumatic experiences to everyday racism, and categorize the domains: racial trauma, racial rejection, racial microaggressions, and systemic racism (7).

Grier-Reed et al. emphasize the damage caused by racism, from aspects such as police brutality and violence in communities to feelings of exclusion and discouragement (7). Racial rejection refers to the experience of feeling unwelcome or not belonging, both among non-black students and in "white spaces." It also includes feeling institutionally unwelcome in the sense that African American culture, history, experiences, and opinions are not supported or represented on university campuses. One of the students explains it as "trying to belong to a club that you don't fit into or doesn't really want you to be a part of it" (Grier-Reed et al. 9). Further, another student explains that he or she experiences that the university only wants diversity to increase the school's status and not for any moral reasons. When the authors talk about racial microaggressions, they refer to cultural insensitivity of different kinds, such as silencing, invalidating, or stereotyping students (8). The last domain is systematic racism which includes "experiences and perceptions of educational and economic disenfranchisement, cultural appropriation, and the criminalization of Blackness perpetuated by media" (Grier-Reed et al. 7). These four domains contribute to an overall understanding of how African Americans experience institutionalized racism within the school system.

Baker-Bell examines and contextualizes the linguistic inequities that Black students experience. They state that the concept of academic language was created during the 1970s to distinguish between the language used inside and outside of school (9). She argues that if it is desirable to have linguistic justice, it is vital to question who is privileged by the norms and standards of academic language. Baker-Bell writes that white standard American English-speaking "students come to school already prepared because
their linguistic and cultural practices are deemed "academic." Most linguistically and racially diverse students begin at a disadvantage because their language and culture do not reflect the dominant white culture that counts as academic" (10). Baker-Bell states that literature can be used as a vehicle for anti-racist Black language pedagogy. This means that including Black language when analyzing literature can help students engage more effectively with the language variations. A model provided by Baker-Bell shows how teachers can work with literature to heighten the awareness of linguistic realities reflected in novels.

The model used by Baker-Bell offers seven lessons with three sections in each lesson and is centered around The Hate U Give. Section one is a description of the theme of the lesson. This section is the shortest and functions mainly as a highlighter as to what is being dealt with by the questions. Section two provides a list of potential activities, for example, "examine the tensions Starr experienced with language and race throughout the novel" (15). She encourages teachers to alter and try different approaches to this model. The third section is a list of supplemental resources for the teacher to use as material with the given aim of the lesson and for the students to further indulge in the subject.

4.3. Methodology

Johnson offers an interesting perspective on how to work with literature as a critical race educator in the English language classroom. Our ambition is to build upon that approach by examining The Hate U Give using concepts from critical race theory. More specifically, the concepts used are institutionalized and internalized racism, and how the reader can utilize the novel to learn more about the connection between the two. We will analyze specific events in The Hate U Give with the two main concepts in mind, as well as Grier-Reeds et al.’s four domains of racism. It is noticeable that they are identifiable in the novel, which indicates that these issues are more or less general for African Americans. The focus of institutionalized racism is on the police force and the educational system, as portrayed in this novel. Our second concept, internalized racism, focuses on white privilege as well as the effect internalized racism has on relationships.

The model, which can be found in the last part of the analysis, is inspired by Baker-Bell's template in how it is constructed with questions. It is scaled down to make it more general so that it is not restricted to The Hate U Give. Not every question may fit with
every book, but we believe they are also broad enough to be used in other novels. Our chosen novel will work as an example of how to apply the model. Each part has specific questions for teachers to discuss CRT relative to their chosen literature. The questions are easily accessible, so students without in-depth knowledge of CRT can also be part of the discussion. By discussing these questions, the aspiration is to make CRT more tangible for the students, leading to a wider and deeper knowledge of the mechanism of racism. The model emerged after the analysis of the book was done with the help of the literature used in this paper. After looking at specific events in the book and the theory used, we created the questions and divided them into two parts, one for each concept.
5. Analysis

5.1. Institutionalized racism

When analyzing the portrayal of institutionalized racism in *The Hate U Give* by looking at scenes, we use the framework proposed by Grier-Reed et al., which comprises the four domains presented earlier. The framework enables us to categorize and estimate the extent and nature of racism depicted in the novel and relate it to the real experiences of the students examined in Grier-Reed et al.’s study.

5.1.1. The police force

Early in the novel, Starr meets her childhood friend Khalil at a party in their neighborhood. After hearing gunshots, Starr and Khalil drive away from the party. On their way home, they are stopped by a police officer. Starr is afraid, especially when Khalil questions the intentions of the police officer. She shares with the readers the lesson she has learned from her father about never questioning an officer: "'Starr-Starr, you do whatever they tell you to do … Keep your hands visible. Don't make any sudden moves. Only speak when they speak to you,’ he told her" (*The Hate U Give* 18). The dialogue between Khalil and the officer was initially calm but escalated when Khalil was "acting smart," according to the police officer;

"What you pull me over for?"
"Your taillight's broken."
"So are you gon' give me a ticket or what?" Khalil asks.
"You know what? Get out the car, smart guy."
"Man, just give me my ticket—"
"Get out the car! Hands up, where I can see them."
Khalil gets out with his hands up. One-Fifteen yanks him by his arm and pins him against the back door.

I fight to find my voice. "He didn't mean—"
"Hands on the dashboard!" the officer barks at me. "Don't move!"
"I do what he tells me, but my hands are shaking too much to be still."
He pats Khalil down. "Okay, smart mouth, let's see what we find on you today."

"You ain't gon' find nothing," Khalil says.

One-Fifteen pats him down two more times. He turns up empty." (The Hate U Give 26)

After being searched several times, the officer tells them to be still and walks away to his car. Despite that, Khalil opens the car door and starts to ask Starr how she is doing when three shots are fired. A short moment later, Khalil is dead on the ground, with Starr in shock crying text to him. The officer yells and points his gun at Starr, the gun with which he just killed her friend.

This scene is the first of many in the novel where we witness police brutality and the dehumanization of African Americans. This kind of violent racism is what Grier-Reed et al. categorize as racial trauma (7), causing Starr to become very fearful and nervous around police officers. In the study by Grier-Reed et al., the students referred to events like these saying that they could cause people to fear for their lives in the hands of the police. Due to the narrative perspective with Starr as narrator, the reader experiences this effect. She expresses herself with great fear when talking about the event multiple times, both about witnessing the murder and about having a gun pointed at her. She clarifies that she knows that all officers are not the same. Still, she shows a lack of trust in the police force. She even starts to question her uncle, who is an officer and whom she deeply loves and trusts, asking him if he would have killed Khalil if he had been in that situation.

Starr is going through many difficult events after Khalil's death. One of them is the witness interrogation. During the interrogation, Starr starts to question the police force more than before. The police officers focus on Khalil as a criminal rather than as the victim, asking questions like "[n]ow, do you know if Khalil sold narcotics?" (The Hate U Give 67) and "[d]o you know if he was involved with the King Lords?" (68). Starr keeps repeating that she feels neglected and silenced. She goes through what Grier-Reed et al. calls racial microaggression (8). This includes Starr's feelings about the officers stereotyping Khalil by portraying him as a gang member, making excuses for what the officer did to him, and not listening to Starr's version of the event. Just as Marlene F. Watson et al. write, "the criminalization of black people makes the abominable behavior by white police seem reasonable or justified" (1365).
Another scene that deals with police brutality is when Starr and the readers witness a humiliating police control. During an argument between Starr's father, Maverick, and a friend, a police car stops in front of them. Two policemen step out and start questioning the situation:

"We got a problem here?" the black one asks, looking squarely at Daddy. He's bald just like Daddy, but older, taller, bigger.

"No, sir, officer," Daddy says. His hands that were once in his jeans pockets are visible at his sides. (*The Hate U Give* 189)

The police continue to ask Maverick to show his ID for no explained reason:

"I'm gonna reach for my ID," Daddy says. "It's in my back pocket. A'ight?"

"Daddy—" I say.

Daddy keeps his eyes on the officer. "Y'all, go in the store, a'ight? It's okay."

We don't move though.

Daddy's hand slowly goes to his back pocket, and I look from his hands to theirs, watching to see if they're gonna make a move for their guns.

Daddy removes his wallet, the leather one I bought him for Father's Day with his initials embossed on it. He shows it to them.

"See? My ID is in here."

His voice has never sounded so small." (190)

There is a great difference in how Maverick approaches the police compared to Khalil's attitude in a similar situation. Maverick is conscious of keeping his hands visible, makes no hasty movements, and obeys the police without questions. It is not only the body language but also the spoken language that separates Khalil's encounter and Maverick's encounter with the police. Baker-Bell highlights the connection between power and language use, as illustrated in the two examples above from *The Hate U Give*. Maverick is aware, consciously or subconsciously, of the power balance in language and uses what could be termed academic language, while Khalil uses what could be described as Black language. Baker-Bell argues that the dominant white culture counts as academic (10). Maverick tries to de-escalate the situation by appropriating the dominant language, while Khalil does not. Still, the officers decide to force him down onto the ground in front of
his family, friends, and neighbors. Starr, who sees everything, is terrified. Flashbacks from the evening with Khalil haunt her; she blames herself, thinking they treated her father this way because they figured she was the witness of their colleague's mistake. Starr is grounded in victimhood, which is connected to internalized racism, where she cannot see her own power to change the situation (Bivens 46). Once again, we see dehumanization, criminalization, and unnecessary violence against African Americans in The Hate U Give.

The Hate U Give is a work of fiction; therefore, we cannot use it as a fair comparison to reality, even though we can see similarities. It is contended that institutionalized racism plays a role in the representation of African Americans, who make up 34.8% of the prison population in the United States (Watson et al. 1366). Proportionally, this represents almost three times more than the African American population. The institutionalized racism within the police force does not only make it more likely for a black person to end up in prison; he or she is, according to Adedoyin et al., 21 times more likely to being killed by an officer, compared to a white person (113). The novel gives us a reasonable perception of things that can and do happen in the United States.

If an officer mistreats or dehumanizes a person of color, the chances for the officer to be convicted are minimal because of "how race is structurally embedded within institutional structures (such as law enforcement) and increases the likelihood for disparate treatment of marginalized groups (such as Black males) to keep them subjugated" (Adedoyin et al. 117). The officer in The Hate U Give is a good example of this type of case. The novel also shows that it is not only the physically violent treatment from the police force that affects minorities; being silenced and stereotyped are examples of other forms of racism that can be hard to identify because of the covert nature of the racism implied in the statement or action (Grier-Reed et al. 9). The microaggression that occurs in the novel when the officers are interrogating Starr is difficult to explain. People in Starr's situation often feel neglected, but explaining the experienced mental exclusion can become problematic. The result of this is that institutional racism within the police force, which we can see in the novel, can continue to exist.
5.1.2. The educational system

Schools are supposed to give students the same opportunity, regardless of where people live and come from, but unfortunately, that is not the reality. Starr and her brothers are transferred to a private school outside of their neighborhood. Even though her father is in favor of supporting the neighborhood and is not ashamed of it, he sends away his children, saying:

"Then, shit, even if you do have a high school diploma, so many of the schools in our neighborhoods don't prepare us well enough. That's why when your momma talked about sending you and your brothers to Williamson, I agreed. Our schools don't get the resources to equip you like Williamson does. It's easier to find some crack than it is to find a good school around here." (The Hate U Give 108)

Maverick wants to help the neighborhood by working and living there, but he does not dare to let his own children attend school in this place because of the lack of resources. He knows that education in the "white neighborhood" benefits his children more and that African-American-dominated areas are not as fortunate when it comes to education.

The novel illustrates institutionalized racism within the educational system by placing the school in a white neighborhood. This is disadvantageous for African Americans because their neighborhoods are often unprivileged. Schools in underprivileged areas receive less financial support, which reduces the quality of education. Also, placing already expensive private schools far away from them gives them less chance to attend because of the commuting costs. So, institutionalized racism is shown when the school minimizes the chance of having people of color attending. Therefore, the choice of school can defy institutionalized racism, but the effects of it cannot be avoided (Tyson 365).

Starr feels like she does not belong in the school and that people like her are stereotyped and inferior to white people. She feels that she cannot talk or act like herself lest she be seen as the typical black girl. That is why she is careful about how she behaves and what she says around those in school, even her white boyfriend, Chris. Starr once "slipped" (The Hate U Give 55) as she phrases it and tells her boyfriend she wishes she could be herself in school. Feeling institutionally unwelcome is what Grier-Reed et al. call racial rejection (9). This includes feelings of not belonging and being culturally
dismissed. Starr mentions a great many times that she is trendy because of her race, but she is also everything else that is negatively associated with African Americans. If her white friends use slang, they are cool; she would classify as "hood" if she did. During a quarrel between Starr and a white friend, Hailey, Starr becomes frustrated, raises her voice, and uses more body language than usual. Afterward, she regrets her actions, feeling like she was judged as "the angry black girl" (75).

It is not the school's fault that she cannot use slang specifically, but it is the school's fault that these unwritten codes about how students of color can and cannot act exist. The school as a social institution sends signals by having a better quality of education, placing private schools in the suburbs, and not wanting a multicultural classroom. The result is what Grier-Reed et al. classify as systemic racism; people in school are grouped, prejudiced, and unaccepted (10). This leads to injustice in school, between white and colored students, and a society where people of color feel they are inferior to those who go to white-dominant schools. Both Starr and her friends in the neighborhood express themselves negatively about the school, calling it a "bougie private school" (The Hate U Give 27). The fact that the school is gated, with a newly built and modern facade, does not improve the situation. This could give the impression that they want to keep people from coming into the school. The consequence of this is that Starr encounters racial rejection from African Americans, such as her friends (Grier-Reed et al. 9). They sometimes act as if Starr is not one of them because of where she goes to school, saying things like, "Them li'l bougie girls from your school don't count" (The Hate U Give 9). As Starr's father said, there is a huge difference between the schools; they cannot be compared. Thus, it is no wonder that her friends feel inferior, not having the possibility that Starr has.

As institutionalized racism is taking form in the educational system in Starr's school, this also affects white students. Starr's classmates feel as if it is acceptable to protest for Khalil only to skip school. Their protesting has nothing to do with fighting for justice; they exploit a situation to benefit from it. Unfortunately, the way their school is structured gives them the liberty to downplay and dismiss African American culture (Grier-Reed et al. 9). Not having to commingle with other cultures, always being superior when it comes to education, work, and police treatment, white students do not feel obligated to show respect, or maybe they do not even know they are acting inappropriately.
5.2. Internalized racism

The analysis of internalized racism in *The Hate U Give* is divided into two main sections. The focus of the first section is on what effect internalized racism has on human interactions, and the second part deals with how white privilege is depicted in the novel. Bivens's writings about the inner and interpersonal dimensions are used, as well as Tyson's writings about white privilege.

5.2.1. The effect on relationships

As mentioned earlier, Tyson argues that African Americans feeling uncomfortable with their skin color often adapt to white people in order to fit in better with the norm because the alternative is rejection from society (346). Starr describes this type of behavior when she states that entering Williamson makes her change her persona. She says it is like "flipping a switch in her brain" (*The Hate U Give* 48), and she even calls the persona "Williamson Starr." Starr describes how she changes her behavior and avoids doing certain things she would have done when she was "Garden Heights Starr" since she does not want to give any of her classmates a reason to call her ghetto. She ends the monologue by stating, "I can't stand myself for doing it, but I do it anyway" (48). This response shows how young African Americans feel the need to alter their personality in order to fit in, and even if they know it is not right, they do it anyway. According to Bivens, one of the manifestations of the inner dimension of internalized racism is having a sense of inferiority towards others, in relation to white people as well as to other people of color (52). Starr's monologue is an example of how living in a racist society can make people of color belittle themselves in order to fit the white norm.

There is an ongoing question in the novel about whether Starr should speak up about what happened to Khalil and testify before a grand jury. It is not obvious that she should do so because of the attention it would most likely bring to her. She goes through a struggle, but with help from her lawyer, Ms. Ofrah, she decides to testify. She feels that she can be the voice of Khalil and that she is the one that can help change this situation. Once again, Starr is being grounded in victimhood, where she struggles with the battle of speaking up or not. Unlike the situation with her father and the police officers, she manages to break free from her victimhood and speaks up.
Another relationship that is interesting to look closer at when analyzing internalized racism is the one between Starr and Hailey, one of her best friends at Williamson. Bivens discusses the perceived need to always read and adapt to white people's thoughts and actions and how this leaves less time and energy for self-development as another manifestation of internalized racism (52). After Starr has accused Hailey of being racist due to her commenting about fried chicken, they meet again at Maya's house. When Hailey becomes impatient and asks why Starr is angry at them, an argument breaks out: "We look at Hailey. She sits back and folds her arms. "I'm not apologizing when I didn't do anything wrong. If anything, she should apologize for accusing me of being racist last week" (The Hate U Give 153-154). Hailey is very reluctant to take responsibility for the actions that clearly hurt Starr, even after Starr pointed out how hurtful it was. While Starr still claims to like Hailey, she becomes more and more uncertain if the hassle of being Hailey's friend is worth it. Throughout the novel, we, as readers, can sense a kind of self-development of Starr where she recognizes Hailey's behavior and comes to a point where she does not tolerate it anymore and protests.

Starr gradually becomes more aware of their problematic interactions and begins to question their relationship. However, it is not until she is talking with her mother that Starr realizes the extent of toxicity that she has had to deal with:

"Don't lie! Remember that drum set you begged me to buy. Why did you want it, Starr?"

"Hailey wanted to start a band, but I liked the idea too."

"Hold up, though. Didn't you tell me you wanted to play guitar in this 'band,' but Hailey said you should play drums?" "Yeah, but—"

"Them li'l Jonas boys," she says. "Which one did you really like?"

"Joe."

"But who said you should be with the curly-headed one instead?"

"Hailey, but Nick was still fine as all get-out, and this is middle school stuff—"

"Uh-uh! Last year you begged me to let you color your hair purple. Why, Starr?"

"I wanted—"

"Because Hailey wanted me, her, and Maya to have matching hair."

"E-xact-damn-ly. Baby, I love you, but you have a history of putting your wants aside and doing whatever that li'l girl wants. Excuse me if I don't like her." (The Hate U Give 165-166)

In this dialogue, Starr's mother tries to make Starr see how she has let herself be influenced by Hailey and how much she has done this in an effort to please Hailey. It is obvious to the reader that Hailey manipulates Starr to serve her own best interest, but it is interesting to see that Starr chooses to follow. Bivens argues that people of color tend to feel inferior in interactions with people with lighter skin than themselves, and this is exemplified in the novel with how Starr feels inferior to Hailey (53). She goes to great lengths to please Hailey to fit into their environment, where Starr is rather exposed as one of the few African American students. It is also evident to the reader that Starr puts her best interest aside for what she thinks is Hailey's wishes, leading to Starr's unhappiness and, further down the line, realizing that Hailey is not a good friend.

Arguably, the reader may sense interpersonal internalized racism in the relationship between Starr and Khalil as well. According to Bivens, relationships between people of color can manifest the interpersonal dimension as well and includes "projecting one's own sense of inferiority and inadequacy onto those of the same race. This results in distrust" (53).

In the scene depicting Khalil's burial, the criminal gang, King Lords, located in Garden Heights, visits the church and leaves a gray bandana on Khalil's chest as a sign of him being a member of the gang (The Hate U Give 84). Starr is quick to believe that this is the case, and it is not until later in the novel that we learn from an actual member of the gang that they only left the bandana to save face. To the King Lords, it is embarrassing that Khalil has turned them down and, after his death, decided to pretend he was a member. When reading this with Bivens in mind, the reader might wonder whether Starr would have been so quick to jump to the same conclusion if Khalil had been white. According to Bivens, Starr is suffering from the interpersonal dimension of internalized racism in this scenario (53). Rather than trusting her own knowledge, Starr accepts that Khalil is a member. Starr's narrator voice rationalizes it for herself by thinking he joined because he wanted the honor of representing their set. Starr and Khalil had been close friends for a long time, but she was still fooled into believing he could join a gang.
5.2.2. White privilege

Starr's relationships with Hailey and Khalil are some examples of the interpersonal dimension of internalized racism. CRT highlights how this dimension can include struggling to retain meaningful relationships with white people because they enjoy white privilege. In this section, we want to explore the concept of white privilege further. Bivens argues that:

In relationships with those with white privilege, [internalized racism] can manifest in a number of ways, including uncontrolled and inappropriately expressed rage at white people for their unwillingness and/or inability to be aware of and take responsibility for their privilege (53).

For example, in one scene, Starr and Hailey start to argue because Hailey realizes that Starr knows Khalil, which is why she has picked fights with her (The Hate U Give 212). This scene is the culprit of a slow argument where Starr had accused Hailey of being racist because she unfollowed her Tumblr when she posted a picture of Emmet Till, an African American boy who was lynched in 1955. Hailey denies this and claims Starr is acting ridiculous.

"Don't you think you owe us an explanation?" she says.

"You owe me an apology too."

"Um, what?"

"You've basically picked fights with me because you were upset about what happened to him," she says.

"You even accused me of being racist." (The Hate U Give 212).

Hailey demands an apology from Starr and claims that she has wrongfully accused her of being racist. From this quote and the background of their conflict, the reader understands how Starr feels when Hailey makes herself out as the victim while, in fact, she is privileged enough not to have to live in the immediate danger of being killed or being close to someone who is murdered, like Starr. The situation escalates when Hailey tells Starr to get over Khalil's death: "The cop probably did everyone a favor. One less drug dealer on the —" (The Hate U Give 213). After Hailey says this, Starr charges at her and slaps her, and a fight breaks out. Starr’s strong response can be interpreted as an outburst.
of rage caused by Hailey being unable to recognize her white privileges in this whole scene, and according to Bivens, this kind of behavior is an example of a manifestation of the interpersonal dimension of internalized racism (53). While Starr at first calmly tries to explain to Hailey why she is angry, Hailey's ignorance and provoking comments about Khalil cause her to lose her temper. On the one hand, it is understandable that Starr becomes upset, given what she knows about the situation, and the fact that Hailey's knowledge is limited to what has been reported through the media makes Starr's frustration only more relatable. On the other hand, Hailey never knew under what circumstances Khalil was murdered and could not possibly know that he was not a drug dealer when that was how the media portrayed him. One might argue that it is not Hailey's fault that she is ignorant but society's fault, which feeds her incorrect, misleading, and racially prejudiced information.

As mentioned earlier, Starr does not use slang because it will make her "hood," but she recognizes her white friends can use slang, and it will only make them "cool" (The Hate U Give 75). This can also be interpreted as a white privilege her friends enjoy without reflecting on it. As Starr changes the manner of how she talks, she also changes her personality to be less flamboyant. The white people at their school do not have to bother with changing the way they speak because their privilege makes them believe that they are the norm and make the rules of what is acceptable behavior and what is not (Tyson 262).

The day after Starr's TV interview, she is in a car on her way to her prom. Chris is with her, but she notices he is quiet (The Hate U Give 183). The silent treatment from Chris is more and more obvious, and at a certain point, she snaps at him and leaves the prom, locking herself in the car parked outside. It turns out that Chris is upset at Starr because he found out from the TV interview that she witnessed Khalil's murder without telling him. He feels neglected and sad because she did not trust him enough to share that traumatic event with her (188). It is obvious from this scene that Chris is focusing on his feelings rather than caring for Starr; he lays another burden on top of her with his handling of the situation.

Tyson states that white privilege is not noticed by those who are privileged (262), and in this scene, Chris is unaware of the privileges he has. When reading the novel with Tyson in mind, this particular scene feels absurd, and Chris seems like an unsympathetic character. However, Chris and Starr work it out by talking, and when Starr expresses her
emotions, Chris does his best to understand her situation; from there, they can move forward, unlike the case with Starr and Hailey. Delgado emphasizes the importance of storytelling to challenge racial inequality. Thus, how Chris deals with their conflict is a good example of how to handle conflicts involving one's own white privilege (45).

When this situation is studied in more depth, it may be stated that if Hailey admits that she has been acting wrong, she also admits to committing a racist act, which is not in line with her view of herself. She believes racism is a static attribute, that a person either is or is not. From her point of view, she cannot commit racist acts because she is not a racist. Contrary to Hailey, Chris is humble in his approach and recognizes that he is able to do bad actions and hurt other people, but he is also ready to take responsibility for this and try to improve and learn.

5.3. Classroom connections

In this last part of the analysis, we look at how to work with literature from a CRT perspective and specifically at how The Hate U Give can be used. Both teachers and students need to know the purpose of any subject area or theme that is brought up in class. Some of the reasons for teaching these race-oriented concepts and themes are presented.

Adedoyin et al. claim that teaching students about racism against African Americans is essential because some students seem to think this is only an issue of the past (119). The Hate U Give provides an interesting opportunity to work with the goals set in the Swedish curriculum, such as "[t]he school should promote an understanding of other people and the ability to empathize. Concern for the well-being and development of the individual should permeate all school activity" (Skolverket 5). By reading about events from the book through the lens of institutionalized racism and internalized racism, we can help develop students' personal views and give them a larger picture of how people are treated, both today as well as historically.

5.3.1. Working strategies

As noted earlier, Adedoyin et al. point out that American students often see racism as a thing of the past. However, as Tyson argues, while we do not read about lynching and people of color being banned from restaurants today, racism is now practiced more on the sly (368). Since racism has changed in its manifestations, it is imperative that we,
as teachers, make our students aware of the forms this oppression takes today. Students may encounter or practice racism without recognizing it for what it is. With the help of the novel and the concepts previously discussed, we hope to educate students to recognize racism so that they will be able to counter it.

With the aim to highlight institutionalized and internalized racism in the novel, we have created a model to critically analyze stories with the help of Baker-Bell's approach. This model focuses mostly on linguistic elements, while ours directly targets the types of racism the characters experience. By asking focus questions, we encourage discussion of events where institutionalized racism and internalized racism are visible in the novel. In this way, the teacher can first explain the concepts, and then the students can concretize them with scenes they read in the book.

When talking about institutionalized racism, we focus on racism within the police force and the educational system since they are portrayed clearly in the novel. We have structured our discussion of internalized racism based on Bivens's definition of internalized racism and her inner and interpersonal dimensions. Since this is a sensitive subject, it is important for the teacher to understand how the specific class dynamics works.

Our model is divided into two sections, the institutionalized racism section and the internalized racism section. Our recommendation is to utilize the definition provided in the terminology section as a base when explaining the concepts. This part can be adjusted to suit different books, and different angles of the concepts need to be highlighted. Nevertheless, it is important for the students to have a base moving forward.

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<th>Example of how the institutionalized racism section can be applied.</th>
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Example of how the internalized racism section can be applied.

Teacher gives information:

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<td>Internalized racism can be described as the result of a person of color being victimized by racism. They internalize it, developing ideas and committing actions that collude and support racism. Different groups of people of color can be pitted against each other, resulting in a hierarchy where the white norm is the goal.</td>
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Question 1

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<td>Are there any characters that change the way they express themselves depending on what situation they are in? If yes: What kind of situations? Who is involved in those situations? If not: Why do you think that is?</td>
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Question 2

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<td>Knowing what you know about internalized racism, can you notice any small actions any character might do that suggests that they have submitted to the hierarchy where the white norm is the goal? Are there any conflicts between people of color from different ethnicities?</td>
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Question 3

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<td>Projecting one's own fear or insecurities upon another person of color is another sign of internalized racism. Have you noticed signs of that behavior in any character in your novel?</td>
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Question 4

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<td>In this novel, are there any relationships between a person of color and a white person? How would you describe their relationship? What do the power dynamics look like?</td>
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6. Concluding discussion

In *The Hate U Give*, the reader can identify clear evidence of institutionalized racism within the police force and education system. In addition to the fatal mistake made by the first officer in the novel, there is a great deal of unnecessary police violence directed at other characters. Maverick is humiliated without clear reasons, and Starr becomes afraid and silenced during her encounters with the police force. The location of Starr's school in the suburbs makes it difficult for African Americans to attend. Since the school situated close to the African American community does not supply students with education of the same quality, this is indirectly a form of institutionalized racism.

Having analyzed *The Hate U Give* in detail, we conclude that internalized racism is common amongst the characters and may be connected to the inner and interpersonal dimensions. The inner dimension manifests in how Starr belittles herself at her school and behaves in a way she normally would not, in order to fit in. The interpersonal dimension is traceable in Starr's relationships throughout the novel, and it may be argued that due to her internalized racism, all her relationships are affected to some extent. However, even though Starr suffers from her internalized racism throughout the novel, there are signs of healing as well. One case in point is the way Chris and Starr are reconciled, which sets a good example of how to deal with situations regarding white privilege and the interpersonal dimension of internalized racism and, in the end, of how to dismantle racist systems.

The novel offers a great many opportunities for students to learn about racial oppression from a CRT point of view. We found that the most effective way of working with *The Hate U Give* in an educational context would be to use the model presented in the analysis part to try to create a discussion amongst the students. In such a discussion, it is preferable to have the teacher act as a moderator thus giving most talking space to the students. Since this is probably unfamiliar territory initially for many students, the teacher should take a more prominent role and lead the discussion with the help of the focus questions.

There are a great many reasons why teaching CRT in schools is beneficial and even necessary. Some of the reasons that have been mentioned are that teachers are responsible for supporting students to become democratic citizens with good values (Skolverket 6), that it promotes social justice (Delgado 4), and that it prevents students from feeling
mistreated or unwelcome (Grier-Reed et al 7). Still, some students in real life experience things similar to those happening to Starr, which is problematic and needs to be highlighted. Meanwhile, some of the events Starr encounters are difficult to grasp as they are far removed from many students' reality and earlier experiences. It is important to understand that obstacles might present themselves when working with CRT. Students might feel distant from the subject and think that institutional and internalized racism is irrelevant to them. Students may even distance themselves from the discussion because they cannot relate or, conversely, because they relate too much (Martin 264). If that is the case, it is important for the teacher to interfere and make Curthoys's reader process visible (256), showing students the similarities they have with Starr. She is around their age, fights with her friends, has controlling parents and annoying siblings, all of which makes it easier for students to relate to the unfamiliar events (269).

In addition, teachers may be uncertain about teaching these sensitive subjects, which may be related to a sense of incompetence. However, Martin claims that the teacher does not need to have full expertise in every aspect of the subject but may, together with the students, use stories, experiences, and learned knowledge to create an awareness about racism. With awareness comes social action, which is a means of working against racism. Martin also believes that students who manage to achieve critical consciousness about an affected population group may find it easier to relate to other affected groups as well (247). Working with The Hate U Give opens up possibilities because of its contemporary themes and the author's writing style. The novel is at a suitable level for young adult readers, and it is eventful, which may promote engagement

Compared to other essays dealing with The Hate U Give in the context of institutionalized and internalized racism, our work stands out in the way we use our core concepts to highlight key scenes. Thus, our particular perspective provides an approach to this novel suitable for an English classroom in Sweden. Hopefully, our suggested approach makes the concepts easier to grasp for students and inspires teachers to use the novel in their lessons. In the future, we would like to see how this approach can be adapted in an actual classroom. However well our model might work in theory, it may need to be adapted when used in practice. It would also be interesting to explore how our model could be applied to other works of fiction portraying internalized and institutionalized forms of racism.
Reference list


